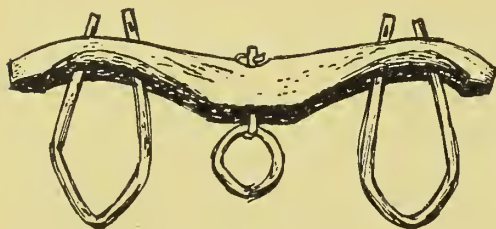


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OUR COMMON LINCOLN ANCESTRY

This month all true Americans pause once more in the chill wind outside Kentucky's most famous log cabin, to catch a glimpse of her renowned son who lies there, a tiny, new-born baby. February 12, so close to the day belonging to the saint of love! Who shall properly describe the valentine joy in Nancy Lincoln's heart when she first saw her little Abraham! From 1809 to 1939 is one hundred and thirty years, -- a very long time to the mind of each of us. Nearly five generations have appeared, lived, and died since that famous birthday in 1809. They spent their lives as a tale that is told. Few of us have much knowledge of our great-great-grandfathers, yet science tells us that we easily inherit our physical and mental qualities from the fifth generation, for it takes longer than that to breed out characteristics from control animals in the laboratories.

Few will dispute that America's noble qualities -- her tolerance, freedom of expression, and democratic institutions -- spring back to her early ancestors. A man will scarcely deny that the shape of his head, the quirk of his mouth, or the talent within him (be it music, finance, architecture, or anything else) comes directly from a parent, or grandparent, who in turn received it as a gift from his ancestors. It is so easy to see how the America of today is the descendant of the America of old, both in acquired habits and ingrained characteristics. Circumstances early made ours the land of freedom, and this the succeeding generations have maintained. Fierce

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pride in conquest and a struggle to make a better living led to the early territorial expansion of our land. Those with that love of freedom compelled a later generation to the seizure of Pacific land and led it to die for the liberation of Cuba. The wild speculation preceding the Panic of 1837 was a characteristic inherited by the generation of men that saw 1929 crash beneath their feet. The fine, indomitable business spirit that built the Cumberland road, that dug the dozens of canals in the Middle West, that persisted in railroad experimentation even when it erroneously attached sails to the cars, was passed on to the generation that never quite gave up the struggle to lay the cable, thence to the generation of men who met death building the telephone wire, the electric battery, or in perfecting the automobile. Finally, this quality of persistent endeavor has appeared in the present generation of men who are giving their lives that others might have the luxuries (and even life itself) which come with the airplane's wings. Americans have received traditional habits as well as mental patterns from their forebearers. Many years have gone since the cowboy swung his lariat. Several generations have passed since man hunted his meat and drowsed after a full meal only to awake at the blood-freezing yell of drunken Indians. Yet where is the man today who does not better enjoy the stringy meal caught by his own hand than a Rector confection, and where the lad who has not lariatied his teddy bear or scalped the neighbor's tot? True, time lends a halo of romance to the work of the father so that it becomes the play of the child.

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The American Civil War was one of the most important events in our nation's history. Need it have been fought? could it have been prevented? These are points for the academician. In point of fact it was fought, and it still strongly influences the life of every man, woman, and child in this land today. Nor is the newest stranger to our shore excepted from its influence. The blessed fact that we live in one land of forty-eight minor divisions rather than in one tiny nation with forty-seven jealous neighbors -- that fact was determined by the outcome of the Civil War. Its ever lengthening shadow over our country's history protects it from the angry glare of state bickering which is exhausting our unfortunate neighbor, the European continent. The fact is a sad one that the beautiful, rural southern aristocracy had to go down in defeat where it has been languishing for nearly seventy-five years. Modern industry and scientific methods, which have given us the twentieth century standard of living, all took their great leap forward from those years of fratricidal conflict. The hordes of immigrants whose needs brought them to our cities in the 1880's found their need for America equalled by America's need for them, and they are now part of that civilization which took its stand in 1865. All of us, from the schoolboy mumbling a list of battle dates to the aged patriarch whose quavering hands once pitched a tent on the old camp grounds, -- yes, all of us are closely connected with that long ago generation of the Civil War.

And the men who directed those heart-breaking, hair-graying, man-killing years? They were the men born in the early 1800's, and

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the grandest figure of them all, the man who touched the towering peaks of sublimity was born in 1809, this day of February 12.

No, five generations ago is not so far back as first it seemed, and it is fitting that we Americans, and we are all Americans in this land, pay honor to the birthday of our glorious ancestor, and go back through the tangled underbrush where he lies, a tiny Kentucky baby. There let us look in reverence at those tiny, baby hands that grew and grew until they were large enough to hold two warring sections of a nation. Two hands, -- and the great heart that ruled those two mighty hands loved each of the sections they held -- North and South. North and South? Two sections? No! The UNITED STATES OF AMERICA!

Muriel Bernitt Drell
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